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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/476,078	12/30/1999	Charles Eric Hunter	IVOO-0099	7280

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EXAMINER
HEWITT II, CALVIN L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3621	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
06/22/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/476,078

Applicant(s)

HUNTER, CHARLES ERIC

Examiner

Calvin L. Hewitt II

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a): In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25,27 and 31-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25,27 and 31-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

***Status of Claims***

1. Claims 1-25, 27, and 31-33 have been examined.

***Response to Amendment/Argument***

2. Applicant is of the opinion that the amended language distinguishes the claimed method from the prior art. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. More specifically, Applicant has merely used different words to express the same limitations. For example, "music" is now "music content item", however, to one of ordinary skill, "music" is content. Similarly, "a customer location" is now a "station being associated with a customer", and "billing the at least one customer for the recorded music selections that are selected for unrestricted playback" necessarily implies a "granting permission for unrestricted playback of the previously recorded music content item", at least after receiving payment in response to billing or before. Therefore, as the scope of Applicant's claims has not changed commensurate with the language, the prior art continues to read on Applicant's claims. Note, "upon" is also conditional as there is no guarantee that the number of plays has reached a predetermined limit.

In addition, Applicant has not indicated who performs the "determining". Therefore, as it's been held that mere automation of a known process that

accomplishes the same result as the known process is not a patentable distinction (*In re Venner*, 120 USPQ 192 (CCPA 1958); *In re Rundell*, 9 USPQ 220 (CCPA 1931)), the combined prior art of Schulhof et al. and Neville et al. ('636, column/line 13/65-14/1; column 17, lines 3-5) continues to read on Applicant's claimed system.

The Examiner recommends Applicant consider the following pages from Applicant's Specification: page 23, lines 12-19 and page/line 25/18-26/2.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 1-28, 30 and 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schulhof et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,572,442 in view of Neville et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,272,636.

As per claims 1-28, 30 and 31-33, Schulhof et al. teach a method for distributing music comprising:

- blanket transmitting, at faster than real time speeds, simultaneously a plurality of music selections to a plurality of

customer households for receipt on a plurality of inputs (figures 1 and 5-7; column 5, lines 50-60)

- a first interface enabling at least one customer to preselect and record transmitted music selections in a read/write storage medium (e.g. read/write CDs, magneto-optical disks, digital tape) (abstract; figures 1, 4, and 6; column 5, lines 6-20 and 50-67; column 7, lines 5-53; column 8, lines 60-67; column 12, lines 54-67)
- a second interface permitting the customer to select recorded music for unrestricted playback (figures 1, 4, and 6; column/line 4/48-5/20; column 5, lines 50-67; column 7, lines 5-53; column 9, lines 20-26)
- communicating unrestricted playback selection information to a central controller, via satellite, cable,...etc., and billing the customer for the selected unrestricted playback (column/line 4/48-5/20; column 6, lines 24-52; column/line 7/54-8/2; column 9, lines 20-26; column 10, lines 42-65)
- selection information that includes availability, scheduling and price data (column 5, lines 60-64; column 7, lines 27-33 and 45-53; column/line 7/61-8/4; column 9, lines 26-38)

- an interactive guide, via a display device, to allow users to make content selections, and select functions to playback and record content (abstract; figures 1-4, 6 and 7; column 7, lines 27-53; column/line 9/65-10/15; column/line 11/65-12/10; column 12, lines 54-67; column 13, lines 10-28; column 14, lines 18-26 and 39-55)
- receiving and decoding musical selections and storing decoded selections and associated information in a digital data storage device for temporary storage (figures 2, 3 and 7; column 9, lines 26-38; column 12, lines 10-18 and 29-67)
- accessing the content over the internet link to a website or phone line connection (figure 1; column 7, lines 35-52)
- allowing users to access content one or more times on a no-charge basis prior to permanently selecting the content (column 9, lines 27-37)
- generating a permanent enabling code for inclusion with the permanent recorded music selections to enable unrestricted playback (column 9, lines 27-37)
- communicating with a broadcast satellite up-link facility, operating in the KU or other suitable frequency bands, via a central controller, and transmitting program/pricing information to the broadcast facility on a periodic basis (figures 5 and 7; column 6, lines 24-52)

Schulhof et al. teach a system for transmitting audio content to a plurality of users, where users can record and playback content using a plurality of interfaces, and are billed for using the content distribution service (figures 1 and 4-7; column/line 4/48-5/67; column 6, lines 24-34; column/line 7/54-8/2). Schulhof et al. do not specifically recite using DVD-RAM to record content. However, Schulhof et al. teach that digital, optical, magnetic or other high density, high capacity can be used. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to use DVD-RAM for portable storage (column 4, lines 55-67; column 8, lines 59-67; column 12, lines 54-64). Similarly it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to store a plurality of disks with content recorded thereon. However, Schulhof et al. do not specifically recite "permitting the at least one customer household to select previously recorded music selections, that were previously recorded by the at least one customer household in the storage medium for unrestricted playback", nor does Schulhof et al. teach generating enabling codes subsequent to the recording of music wherein said codes enable unrestricted playback. Neville et al. teach allowing users to access content stored on a user device on a trial basis, then sending an enabling code to allow further use of the previously recorded product after the trial period had expired (abstract; column 13, lines 5-44). Regarding Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to combine the teachings of Schulhof et al. and Neville et al. to allow consumers to evaluate a fully functional product while protecting content

providers from malicious use on the part of the consumer ('442, column 9, lines 27-37; '636, column/line 1/35-5/35).

***Conclusion***

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Calvin Loyd Hewitt II whose telephone number is (571) 272-6709. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM-5:00 PM.

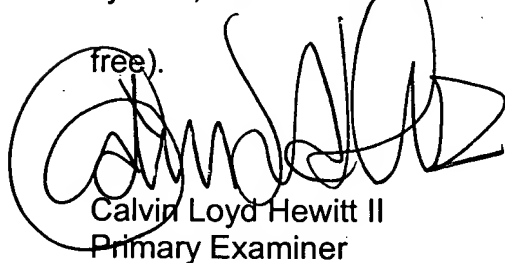


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If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Andrew Fischer, can be reached at (571) 272-6779.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-

free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Calvin Hewitt", is written over a circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Calvin Loyd Hewitt II  
Primary Examiner

June 11, 2007